



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

## NMFS Requests Applications for Participation in the Atlantic Highly Migratory Species 2008 Shark Research Fishery

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) requests applications for participation in the 2008 shark research fishery. The shark research permits would authorize participation in the shark research fishery and the collection of sandbar and non-sandbar large coastal sharks (LCS) from Federal waters in the Atlantic Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Caribbean Sea for the purposes of scientific data collection subject to 100 percent observer coverage. Generally, these permits will be valid through December 31, 2008, unless otherwise specified, subject to the terms and conditions of individual permits.

The Final Rule for Amendment 2 to the Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) (will publish on June 24, 2008) and will establish, among other things, a shark research fishery to maintain time series data for stock assessments and to meet NMFS' 2008 research objectives. The commercial shark fishermen selected to participate in the shark research fishery are the only vessels that would be able to land/harvest sandbars subject to the sandbar quota available for each year (87.9 mt dw/year through December 31, 2012; 116.6 mt dw/year after January 1, 2013). Those selected to participate would also have access to the non-sandbar LCS, small coastal shark (SCS), and pelagic shark quotas. Commercial vessels not participating in the shark research fishery may only land non-sandbar LCS, SCS, and pelagic sharks subject to the retention limits and quotas per 50 CFR 635.24 and 635.27, respectively.

NMFS will review the submitted applications based on the selection criteria as described in the Federal Register notice and information provided on the application form to determine which applicants are qualified to participate in the shark research fishery.

Qualified applicants are those that:

- possess a valid directed or incidental shark permit;
- possess a valid United States Coast Guard (USCG) safety inspection decal;
- have not been charged criminally or civilly (i.e., issued a Notice of Violation and Assessment (NOVA) or Notice of Permit Sanction) for any HMS related violation;
- have complied with NMFS observer programs and are able to take a NMFS-approved observer; and,
- submit a completed application by July 15, 2008.

Only vessels which meet all of the above qualifications will be considered for the shark research fishery.

Of the qualified applicants, NMFS will randomly select approximately 10 qualified applicants to participate in the 2008 shark research fishery based on the temporal and spatial needs of the research objectives, the available quota, and the availability of the qualified applicants. These selected applicants will be issued shark research permits and will be subject to 100 percent



observer coverage on all shark research fishery trips. A shark research permit will only be valid for the vessel and owner(s), subject to the terms and conditions listed on the permit and thus cannot be transferred to another vessel or owner(s). The shark research permit may be revoked, or modified at any time and does not confer the right to engage in activities beyond those listed on the shark research fishery permit.

Commercial shark fishermen who are interested in participating in the shark research fishery must complete a Shark Research Permit Application and submit all the required information, by July 15, 2008, in order to be considered. For copies of the application, please write to the HMS Management Division 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 or call (301) 713-2347 (phone), or (301) 713-1917 (fax). Copies of the application are also available at the HMS Management Division's website at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/index.htm>. Please submit completed applications to the HMS Management Division at the address listed above or by fax. Final decisions on the issuance of a shark research fishery permit will depend on the submission of all required information, and NMFS' review of applicant information as outlined in the Federal Register notice.

This notice is a courtesy to individuals interested in HMS fisheries activities to keep you informed about your fishery. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register. For further information, contact Karyl Brewster-Geisz, LeAnn Southward Hogan, or Jess Beck at (301) 713-2347.



Alan Risenhoover  
Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries

6/19/08

Date

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